



A laughing March Boedihardjo at his new university. It is designing a special five-year course for him after his A-level success

Maths boy, 9, wins place at university

**By Richard Spencer
in Beijing**

A NINE-YEAR-OLD boy from Hong Kong has won a university place after becoming the youngest child

to gain two A-grade A levels.

The case of March Boedihardjo, who moved to Britain from his native Hong Kong after his 14-year-old brother was accepted at Oxford University, opened a

debate in the city about whether gifted children should be pushed so far ahead of their physical age.

But after a week of deliberation by four universities to which he applied about whether he was mature enough to cope with college life, March was given a place by Hong Kong Baptist University.

"I'm quite lucky," said March, who spent two years in one-on-one tuition at a private college in Oxford.

He said there was no reason why he should not attend university now like others who had passed their A-levels.

"All my schoolmates study in universities after they graduate. I don't want to discontinue my mathematics studies."

On top of his two A grades in maths and further maths, he won a B in statistics, and a merit in the advanced extension award, designed to test the brightest students.

He also gained eight

GCSEs, which he sat at the same time. His father, Tony Boedihardjo, an ethnic Chinese originally from Indonesia, recognised his son's intellectual gifts early, yet still wanted to keep him in his local state primary school.

But when March's brother, Horatio, won a place two years ago at Oxford at the age of 14, he decided the three of them should move to Britain.

March, then aged seven, was rejected for places at local primary and secondary schools, so his father enrolled him with Greene's tutorial college in Oxford, which is normally aimed at sixth-formers.

March said his biggest fear was the attention he would get when he started university.

"There is a lot of pressure on me," he said.

The university in Hong Kong is designing a five-year course for March that will lead to an undergraduate degree and a masters.